The Tillage of Light Or, A true discouerie of the philosophicall elixir, commonly called the philosophers stone.

by Patrick Scot 1623

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THE TILLAGE OF LIGHT OR, A TRVE DISCOVERIE of the Philosophicall Elixir, com|monly called the PHILOSO|PHERS STONE.

Seruing, To enrich all true, noble and generous Spirits, as will aduenture some few labors in the til|lage of such a light, as is worthy the best obser|uance of the most Wise.

By PATRICK SCOT, Esquire.

Agere & pati sortia,
Sed
Misereri & sapere difficile.
Tamen
Quemcun{que} fortem videris miserum ne dixeris,
quia
Labore & patientia dura molescunt.

LONDON, Printed for William Lee, and are to be sold at his Shop neere Serieants Inne in Fleetstreet, at the Signe of the Golden Bucke. 1623.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE, AND euery way Noble, IOHN, Marquesse of HAMLETON, Earle of Arren, Lord Euendeale, Gentleman of his Maiesties Bed-chamber, Knight of the Noble Order of the Garter, and one of his Maiesties most Honorable Priuie Councell, in the Kingdomes of England, and Scotland.

RIGHT HONORABLE,

ALthough many powerfull motiues haue giuen wings to my boldnesse, to beg that my ill tilld Tillage may bee enclosed by the hedge of your Honours Protection; yet the chiefest reason is, that your innate Wisedome and Bountie-polished by the Theoricke practise, and loue of Learning, values reall good meaning, aboue greater showes of

fawning flattery, or affected curiositie.

I doe but set a Candle before the Sunshine of your exquisite knowledge in the true Diuine and Philosophicall Elixir; but sith what I haue done, is as well to shew my ambition to haue your Honourable approbation, as to bee a Symboll of my zeale to your seruice: If it please your Honour to pardon my zeale, you may iustly condemne my aspiring ayme, whose prematured Labours soares so high, as giue Cognizance to the world, that as I am, I shall euer continue

Your Honors deuoted Seruant, PA. SCOT.

TO THE GENEROVS READER.

THere is, generous Reader, no Tillage more difficult, then that of the Heart; in the heart, no field more rough to plough, then that of Wisdome: maruell not then that my blushing pen proclaimes my ill Husbandry, in putting off this ill cultur'd Farme to your suruey; yet if you value the Balkes with the better Ground, you shal rate the whole at a high price: Howsoeuer, I am your Suppliant, that you will accept of my Loue in the offer; laugh at my vanitie, in greeting you with Performance, and conceale my rusticitie in both. Your hard censure may perhaps send my Plough to guard the Breach of some Caterpiller-eaten Hedge, turne my Grounds waste, to bee Nurseries of Brambles, or inroll mee Retainer to Duke Humphrey, who hath already moe Attendants then good cheere.

Farewell.

Preparatio, Analogia & perfectio operis Diuini & Philosophici.

IN sudore vultus tui manducabis panem tuum.

Virtutem sudore dii obuallarūt.

Perseuerantia sola virtutum coronatur.

Qui perseuerabit vs{que} ad finem is saluus erit.

Fac volatile fixum & fixum volatile, sic habes magisterium.

Errata.

PAge 1. lin. 5. reade Hipocrates for Hipocrites. pag. 1. l. 14. read Elixir, as else where. pa. 4. l 18. read Mettallicall. pa. 23. l. 5. reade that for the. l. 7. reade pounding for punding pa. 24. l. 3. after corporall, a full point. pa. 25. l. 15. read there for then. pag. 26. l. 22. read yet, for that, pag. 29. l. 20. reade stone.

THE TILLAGE OF LIGHT.

SVch is the community of Loue, and simpathy of affections, which ciuill societie challengeth of vs in tendring the weale of others, as our owne, that as Hipocrites his Twins who sorrowed and sickned together, wee ought equally condole either publike calamities, or priuate distemperatures: if then I shall, by my Tillage forestall the painefull toile and wastefull charges which I obserue, haue beene and are, yet vnprofitably imployed in the search of an imaginarie non ens, onely knowne by the vsurped name of the Philosophers elixar, or stone, I hope I shall wrong no true Artist, and preuent some future charges in the finding out of Artificiall gold, or (as some name it) light incorporat by art, which is but a poysonable pill gilded with sophisticated curiosity, base couetousnesse or incroaching cunning; emulous strangers and irreconcilable enemies to Philosophy.

That I may the better cleere this, let vs consider first, that Philosophy in the denomination, is onely extended to the loue of wisdome; that this wisdome consists in moulding the actions of Philosophers in a diuine frame, and innocent obseruance of humane societie; that by such presidencie and imitation, wisdome might bee exalted to the highest degrees of humane reach: but least wisdome might Prophesie to the winde; or that shee will not be apprehended but of sound mindes; that a glorious spirit will not appeare but in her owne kinde, and that a precious seed requires pure earth, these Philosophers did sometimes pourtrey wisdome in darke hierogliphicks, sometimes in fabulous attire, they haue deified her, entituling her to the names of Mercury, Pallas, Minerua, begotten by Iupiter; all which doe mystically imply that true wisdome commeth, and by vs receiued from heauen.

If wee will leaue these heathen sparkes of natures light, and looke backe vpon the glorious sunne of sacred writ, we shall finde, that in the beginning and succession of time, wisdome was recommended to vs by mysteries, parables, allegories and analogies: but that diuine Oracles or Philosophicall morals were applied to any materiall elixar, or that any curious search was any further allowed then might aduance wisdome, bee profitable to humane societie heare, speake glory to the Creator, and ioy to the Creature heereafter, wee neuer finde warranted in diuine or humane records. I admit that there is a quallity of brightnesse giuen to cleere bodies, euen from the Creation; that this light is called the soule of the world, and must be first incorporat, as a visible quallity in a cleere body, before it can giue light, vegetat or make inanimat things pleasant. This light was incorporat in the sunne, whose vertue and essence cherisheth the essence of euery creature: but the full knowledge of the tillage of light, ariseth from the true notice of the first and last end of things: as man was created of pure earth, coagulat by pure ayre: so his last end is to shine as the sunne. There bee spirituall, intellectuall and sensible perfections of light; the first is that inaccessible light which seeth all things, but is comprehended of nothing; the second is a spirituall reallity, whose nature possesseth no place, yet is intyrely whole in euery part of his circumscription: by the third wee vnderstand the senssible perfection of the Sunne, Moone and Starres. Because heauen and earth differ not essentially, being originally from one Chaos but in the order of beings, and prime termination: therefore as Kings, Rulers and Magistrates, and others

eminent in Charge, are called lights, as hauing relation to supreame light: so wee may take precious stones, salts and mettalls for inferiour fixed lights, for the better pollishing of nature and illustration of art; the knowledge and vse whereof Angels and men are not able to expresse. The lowest kinde of light we apprehend as it is a meanes, whereby the eye discerneth his oblect, or as it is substansified in man, or as it is fixed in a Homogeniall body of naturall radicall heate, as in precious stones, salts and mettals, of the last whereof we are heare to consider, specially what nature and art can doe, either ioyned or seuered, in reducing of mettalls to the perfection and multiplication of millions, by proiection of an Elixar vpon vnrefined metalicall substances; whether the Philosophers perfection is literally to bee vnderstood of a materiall Elixar, or whether Vrim and Thummim, aurum dei, Ezekiells coales of fire, quintessence, and Philosophers elixar are meant of multiplication of gold by art, or whether Alchimists haue wrongfully enforced these titles vpon the Philosophers worke, (as Sophisters cauill vpon words when they want matter) which are onely to bee vnderstood in an allegoricall sense.

In this consideration wee must beginne againe at the true ends of diuine light and Philosophy; whose designes are (as I haue said) vnder shadowes to exalt the excellency of wisdome, and not to keepe her as a Bu|son to spend idle time; neither to wrong na|ture, or flatter art, by making the one be|leeue what shee cannot doe, and by perswa|ding the other to bring imposture into the world. Nature onely extendeth her selfe to the first perfection of the Creatures, and pro|duceth naturall effects from naturall causes. Art by it selfe can but dignifie and pollish natures workes; by a kinde of sublimation separate the grosse parts from the pure, recti|fie the substance of things, & draw from vile things wholesome and good effects, but neuer adde essence to the first substāce other then it had before. Nature & art ioyned, may attain more glorious perfections; yet is miracu|lous multiplication of vnrefined substances of another nature, by proiection, without the extent of their Commission, least surrepti|ciously they should vsurpe vpon the great wheele of the world their Ruler, and presump|tuously intrude into their soueraignes place. For that All-seeing eye which pearceth through ages, as the sunne through the ayre, did from the beginning foresee the corrup|tion of nature, & curious peruersenes of art; therefore to stay the one and the other, hee did confine them within the precinct of his will, least they should extend their il actions

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as farre as their ill wills: I grant through an admirable wisdome hee hath left some part, of these low terrestriall things vnper|fected in a kinde, to serue vnto man as mat|ter to worke vpon; he hath giuen vs corne, not bread but art to make it; woole and not cloth, but art to make it; mines not money, but art to coyne it; and hee hath giuen vs stones not buildings, but art to make them. This Al-seeing light hath established a rule and certaine law, whereby all things must bee produced, disposed, and main|tained in their owne kinde; which re|gular order, so long as wee make it not an essence separate from him, wee may call it na|ture; hee hath apointed art to bee natures helper, and to cooperate with her in the great hopes of the world. But hath barred both of them from transmutation by a pre|matured birth of things of another quallity, into such a fixed perfection as may multiply millions, neither can nature and art multi|ply otherwise, then by putrifaction and pro|pogation: it is his eternall decree, that none of his Creatures be inuested in that glorie which is proper to himselfe, least foolish man should ptesume vpon base earth, or thinke that hee had committed the gouernment of his Creatures to his seruants nature and art, to set himselfe at rest; who is still in action, shyning in his wonderfull workes; in com|municating

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his infinit goodnesse to all his Creatures, and aboue all to man. These be great Master-peeces of light, which none but his owne hand can worke; whereby it must necessarily follow, that whatsoeuer powerfull faculties wee obserue in the second causes, they must not induce vs to thinke that the first cause is idle, or that the others doe any thing but the direction of the first, farre lesse must wee beleeue that this order and continuance of things which wee call nature, is the chiefe cause of them, but the effect of the will of diuine prouidence and beames of the great light, no more then in musicke the melody is not the cause, but the effect of concords produced by the skill and art of the Musitian, who gathereth the sounds, and reduceth them to consonance.

This diuine prouidence is so powerfull, that he can apply any thing to doe his pleasure; though hee seldome lets the naturall course and vse of nature and art, yet carrieth hee them where he pleaseth; and like that great circle of heauen that inuellopeth all the rest, doth hee dragge them after him about the world.

You see then that nature and art, either seuerally or ioyntly are but the handmaids of diuine prouidence which filleth, gouerneth & ouerspreadeth all things, and ruleth euery part thereof with infallible councell and

most certaine reasons: that wee doe not apprehend this sacred light, but either very late or not at all, is, because this wisdome is so deepe, that we cannot penetrate vnto it; or that our negligence or stupidity is so great, that wee vouchsafe not to consider rightly what nature and art can doe; and what they cannot doe. What more fond conception can there bee, then that art by fire can force nature, to produce that which in the current of her course and connexion of causes shee cannot doe? or that nature and art ioyned, can Metaphisically transmute natures works to other ends then they were created; or forme them in other moulds then their own. Wee may as probably suggest, that art may enable fish to liue and multiply vpon the land, beasts in the ayre, and foules without ayre; as that Mineralls remooued from their naturall places, may by art bee brought to multiply in a greater perfection, then by nature in the wombe of the earth, where the sunne applieth his force, according to the quallity and disposition of the matter; for Mineralls can neuer be said properly to multiply or propogate, because they haue onely elementall mixture, but wants either vegetable seed, or sensible

quallity. That the mysticall inuolution of all those titles and operations which might seeme to point at a materiall Elixar, were to other and better ends
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then Alchimists imagine, shall be prooued by the truth of diuine and humane wisdome.

First, as the Almighty did shadow vnder the great name of Iehouah, his eternity, omnipotency, iustice and mercie, to teach the sonnes of wisdome to admire, adore, feare and magnifie him, who was before all time glorious in Maiesty, omnipotent in power, impartiall in Iustice, and superabundant in Mercie: so, in beautifying the Priest-hood with the rich ornaments of nature and art, hee adorned the breast-plate of Aaron with twelue precious stones, according to the twelue Tribes, leauing a place in the midst for Vrim and Thummim, intimating by the first, the purity and graces wherewith Pastors and people ought to be indued heare vpon earth, and by the second, their perfection in the Kingdome of Grace and glory in heauen hereafter. That Vrim and Thummim signifie light and perfection wee are not to doubt, but that they were artificiall substansified substances is not yet cleered. As the rest of Ezekiels vision was a similitude of the glory of the Lord in the deliuery of his Ambassage to the Prophet, so by the firie coales or stone mentioned in that vision, is meant the force and effects of Gods word. Aurum Dei, spoken of in that prophesie or else where in Scripture, alluds to the incomprehensible
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goodnesse of the Creator; and to the holinesse and thankefulnesse required in the prime Creature. But if wee beleeue, that any of these pointed at a materiall elixar or substance to be sought by art, if it bee not heresie it is grosse errour: all Scripture (as Isidor learnedly seconds the rest of the Fathers) ought to be interpreted morrally and vnderstood Spiritually; whosoeuer then applieth it otherwise to things that peruert the nature, order, and meaning of Scripture, may be good textuaries, but are rash text-wresters and not better grounded in Diuity then Rabbelais or the Curat, that applied the authority of his horse to those that denyed purgatorie. It was Arius prancke, Verba Scripturarum simplicia sicuti in eis reperiuntur itidem vt Diabolus assimulare: to wreast sinfully the words of Scripture, as they are expressed (if wee may beleeue Eusebius) is a loosnesse of liberty, and lightnesse of vanity more then any of the Fathers durst take vpon them.

Next, that the strayning of the Philosophers work to an artificiall Elixar, powerfull to multiply Gold by proiection, driues all wit out of harmony; I prooue by the chiefe ayme of Phylosophie, then by the harmefull consequences which the infinite multiplication of Golde would produce. All Phylosophers agree, that their principall ayme is,

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to extract a light or a true Summum bonum (as they call it) or content from the contempt of adulterate, inconstant, terrestriall suggestions and delights: if this bee true, as most true it is, it would follow, that Philosophers would neuer haue bestowed so much labour in vntwining a Spiders web, and finding out a light by the multiplication of Gold, which they did hold their Summum malum, and in so base account, that some of them when they had it, did throw it in the Sea; others when they might haue had it, did refuse and reiect it, that they might with more ease attaine to that content which Philosophie enioyeth: from which the cursed care of Gold so much detracteth, that (as Experience telles vs) by it Religious dueties are prophaned, Iustice corrupted, all bonds of ciuill societie and true friendship are infringed, and the light of Humanitie quite rased out of the mindes of worldly Golden Spirits.

Secondly, if it were possible to multiply or transmute a greater proportion of other vnrefined Mettals into Gold by proiection, what benefit should thereby arise either to the Philosophers, or from them to others? they should acquire nothing by it but corruption of manners, and staine of their profession, others but the euersion of all polițike gouernment, mutuall commerce, and

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industrious exchange: Kings should be inferiour to Philosophers in the purchase of so great Treasure: and so all Soueraigntie (to whom by all Nationall Lawes belong the prerogatiue of all Gold and Siluer Mynes) would turne againe to a confusion, and hotch-potch: many that are now holden wise, would perhaps turne fooles, and those that haue now little wit, would haue then none at all. Wee should see euery couetous pennie-father, mercilesse Ʋsurer, and Iewish Broker become Philosophers, and conuert the blood of the poore vpon which they now feed, into the new found Elixar. We should see the Philosophers pearne their Cloaks, and become insatiable worldlings, vsurious Caterpillars, hellish pawn-mungers, and cut

the garıments of the necessitous, to make them riıding coates in their iourney towards hell. O what a pitifull sight were it to see the of-falls of heauen, the drugges of the earth, and hells fit fagots inuested in heauens richest inıdowments? But what more tragicall speıctacle were it to behold Ʋertue stript naked, spoyled of her beautie, heauens gate which now stands open for her, close shut vp, and the entrie confined to the narrow passage of a Needles eye, through which how hard it is for Asses loaden with Golde and corruption to enter, the Master of Heauen, when hee was vpon Earth hath foretold. I tremble
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as in an Ague, to heare of this exchange, that Ʋice should reach Heauen, and Vertue enter in the right way to Hell.

O deceitfull Riches, how falsely are you called goods! who knoweth you rightly may entitle you to be true euils; none makes vs bond-slaues but you, none wrongeth vs but you; you abridge vs of our libertie, and intercepts vs in our way towards Heauen: O pelfe, none can praise you, but must disıpraise true Libertie. None can get you, or keepe you, without the hazzard of loosing themselues; you are Achanes Wedges, or Turnus his girdle, that bereaues vs of life. So ticklish and hard is your vse, that seldome do you more good nor harme. I do verily beıleeue, if frowning Fortune can fauour good men in any thing, it is in releeuing them from that burthen that so sore presseth their shoulders.

But thinke mee not so surcharged with passion, as I seeme to fauour a Stoycall austeıritie, Heremitish retyrednesse, or voluntary poıuerty, I affect lawfull libertie in the first, and am so farre from barring good men from the right vse of Riches, that if I were not fully assured that diuine Prouidence hath her secret endes for our weale, and knoweth better what is good for vs then our selues, I should goe neere to suspect her of Iniustice, in vnıequall sharing of her temporal goods; which
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so long as we vse as dispensators of them to the supply of our owne wants, and helping of the necessities of others, so long are they Heauens good blessings, and the charitable dispensation of them, is the concomitant efıfect of sauing Faith; yea, they are so necesısary to the best of men, that without them they are not able to effect that good which they would doe. But when we adore Gold for God, and in chesting, or putting of it to vnlawfull vse, starues our fellow memıbers, and

smoothers Vertue with want; or when we make it the fuell of Ambition, corruption, and iniustice, then iustly may those blessings bee changed into curses; Riches which were giuen to bee our seruile vassals, and dutifull seruants in our iourney towards happinesse, bee made our racking Land-lords, or mercilesse executioners heere, and the Paradisian sword to barre our entry there; where before we can haue a Quietus est, wee must giue account tam eorum que accepimus, quam eorum que rapuimus. Moysture was not giuen to Springs to remaine in the place where it is bred, but to be conueyed by Conduits to the watering of barren drie grounds. Nature at first was deliuered of two daughters, saith Plato, Plentie, and Pouertie, that the one wanting might craue what shee lacked, and that the other hauing might supply Pouerties wants. But when

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Iacke turnes Iohn out of doores, or when plentie profuseth vpon idle vses, and starues her sister pouertie, that is, not dispensare, but dissipare bona aliena, not good menagerie, but bad husbandrie of goods committed to our trust. There is nothing more certaine, then that best things abused are most dangerous; our Vnderstanding, the soueraigne facultie and Sunne of the soule in mans little World, in our first estate of innocencie, made vs little inferiour to Angels, being now depraued, makes vs inferiour to beasts, who hauing nothing but sense, yet seeme they, by keeping Natures lawes, and directing their appetite to its proper obiects, to offer lesse iniury to reason then wee, who leaues the true obiects of Wit and Will, and affect nothing so much as falshood for truth, vice for vertue, shadowes for substance, and Pigmalion-like dotage on pictured beautie. What shall I say of either curious or couetous metaphisicall spirits, but that like Adam they long to eate forbidden fruite, or like Moles, nusle themselues in the earth, and so together are depriued of light here, and returne to darknesse and dust from whence they came; after which, their name is either extinguisht with them, or neuer recorded but to their shame. To this purpose, Lucian bringeth vpon the stage, couetous rich Gnipho, bewayling in hell, that the incestuous prodigall

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Rodochares did vpon earth wastefully consume his ill gotten goods. Cum Religio parit diuitias filia deuorat matrem: where deuotion is onely extended to hatch Riches, there oft times the Daughter strangles the Mother, saith Saint Augustine. Man is not onely mortall, that hee may haue an end of his misery, that the good may bee praised without enuy, the wicked blamed without feare, or that riches may bee dispised as vnnecessary after death: but as mortalitie is the reward of vertue; it is also the wages of wickednesse, that the good may bee eternally happy, and shine as the Sunne, and the wicked vnhappy and inclosed in darkenesse: for wickednesse and punishment are twinnes, that are borne and liue together; the one comes first into the world, and the other followeth at his heeles, and is the executioner of the first by the stinging remorse of Conscience, heauy and mournfull sorrowes, bitter repentance, remedilesse despaire; and by the terrour or hope of this diuine Iustice in punishing of vice, or rewarding of vertue were the actions of the Philosophers restrayned from vice, and inured to vertue, by the contempt of couetousnesse, and the tartnesse of their condition allayed with the sweetnesse of the hope of future Riches. Since we must depart hence without carrying any thing with vs, it is not for our ease to be as easily

loaden with luggage as we can? If we will consider rightly, we shall finde that a moderate cariage, euen in greatnesse, may bee fitly compared to those that saile close by the shoare; that ambitious or couetous aspiring or griping, resembles those that are in the Mayne: the one by casting a small rope may come to the land when they please, the other must attend winde and tyde, and so oft times by boysterous stormes, or contrary windes suffer shipwracke, or misse their wished hauen.

If wee speake truely, there is nothing that makes greatnesse great, but moderation of high fortunes setled in generous minds by a due examination and contempt of base flying vanities, and by the praise-worthy aspiring to the glory of frugall imployment of its short time in those Honourable Actions, which onely challenge the name of greatnesse. I meane not by frugall moderation, a parcimonious hand which is able to drawe contempt vpon Soueraigntie, but that true noble and iudicious meane betwixt all extreames, which adde one stage more to the Trophies of greatnesse: whereof if wee did know the vertue, wee should not censure it as we doe: But when wee iudge of moderate frugalitie in strangers, shee gayneth her cause, and goeth away with praise and reputation; but our priuate interest corrupts

our iudgement in things that concernes our selues. What are the rarities of Wisedome, Nobilitie, or Discretion, rightly placed in greatnesse, but as capitall

Diamonds which shine in rich Iewells? Salomon is no lesse admired, in giuing the Childe to the right Mother, then in his Treasure and store-house of Wisedome: Alexander is no lesse great in conferring a rich reward aboue the desert of a modest suitor, yet beseeming the dignitie of the giuer, then for conquering the whole world: great Charles the Emperour is as famous by giuing of a Penny to a presumptuous bold Bufon, that claymed to bee his kinseman from Adam, as he is iustly honored for all his braue actions in peace and warre.

But to come to my taske, perhaps you will say, that for shunning the former euils, the Philosophers did obuiate this communitie of their Elixar, by communicating of it to none but to the sonnes of wisedome, I answere, that such concealement of knowledge was against the Philosophers doctrine; as they were Learners, so they were Teachers; Scire & Nescire was their Embleme, that they might take others helpe in the one, and they were so carefull in the other, that their light should not shine vnder a Bushell; they did put it in a Lanterne with this superscription vpon the Frontis-piece, that all the learned might reade, Scire tuum nihil est nisi te scire hoc sciet alter: if wee shall be only wise to our selues, wee shall at last turne fooles; standing water turnes puddle. As Wisedome spoke by Africanus, Ʋsus me genuit, Mater me peperit: so is it vse and communication of studies that begetteth Wisedome. I say further, that there was neuer Art hauing a knowen subiect, and principles, but some one or moe, although not all may be as capable of it as another; neither hath any Art been so concealed, but by tradition or writing, hath been communicate to others, and reduced to some certaine perfection. If the knowledge of this Elixar did by tradition come to Miriam the sister of Aaron, (who as some say was learned in this Art) then certainly the Reuealers were much to be blamed, for communicating such a mysterie to a womans tongue, which they might as safely haue committed to the wind: That shee had that knowledge by diuine reuelation, I will not take Alchimists word for warrant, credo quod haud, the rather, that in all my obseruations, by perusing most Authours vpon this Subiect, or conuersing with some chiefe Professors of this Chimera, I haue neuer found truely demonstrated, that there was, or is such a thing in rerum natura, as Alchimists dreame this Philosophers Stone to be. I confesse, I haue seene many Texts wrested to wrong constructions; that I haue heard much thundring of the perfection to which this Nothing hath been brought: but because Ex nihilo nihil fit, nothing did ensue but consumption of the Vndertakers estates, and losse of their labors. Therefore, since words without deeds are weake proofes, I reiect such authoritie as Apochryphall, and am so farre from beleeuing such fairded suggestions, that if the Phylosophers positions were literally to bee vnderstood, I should neuer hold them other then like Mathematicall demonstrations, wherein by many fayre propositions is prooued much, whereof no Artificer can make vse vpon Wood or Stone.

I should not much wrong the Philosophers, if I should iouially coniecture, that the punctuall setting downe a seeming reall Elixar, was to exercise curious spirits, least they should precipitate themselues vpon the more dangerous Rockes of higher forbidden Mysteries, or become altogether idle: for although the more wee looke vpon the Sunne, the more our eyes are dazelled, and our sight worse; yet are our mindes fraughted with such peruerse curiositie, that they ayme at things aboue our reach. On the other side, Oli•dant vitia, Idlenesse is the cursed mother of many wicked brood, and is the

tares which the enuious sowe when wee sleepe. It is obserued for future posteritie, that whilest the Romanes had warre with Carthage, and enemies in Affricke, they knew not what vice meant in Rome. Idlenesse is that Laconish mother, Schoole-master, and Burreawe that bringeth foorth, teacheth, and hangeth vp Theeues, or what shall I call her but the infected ayre that ingendreth caterpillers, which consume the sweete of other mens sweat If it were strictly obserued, that none should eate but such as labour in their owne calling, I thinke moe should die of hunger, then of sickenesse: but it is pitie that such Drones, or Domitian flees should eate vp the Hony of the painefull, or swarme in the Courts dedicate to Vertue. Euery man ought to haue a sweating Browe, to beget the necessities of life, or a working Braine, to aduance the publique good; the most Blessed alloweth of no Cyphers in his Arithmatique: Paradise was as well a Shop to exercise Adams hands with labour, as it was a Garden to feede his Senses with delight. To this purpose, in the discouery of Curiositie and Idlenesse, the minde of man is fitly compared to a Clocke, composed of many wheeles, admitting euery day change and alteration; sometimes it goeth too fast, sometimes too slowe: when it is idle, it is alwayes subiect to rust; but skilfully

wrought, neatly kept, carefully winded vp, and orderly set to a right houre, then in action it sheweth faire, and goeth right. If wee would haue our mindes goe in right temper, wee must propose vnto our selues those Rules that may conduct and auayle vs most, in the right carriage of all our actions, although sometimes the successe bee thwarted, and concurre not alwayes with our desires, yet wee must be still in action. Many skilfull Pylots haue suffered Shipwracke, that were well acquainted with the Art and experience of Nauigation, and others lesse seene therein, haue ouerpast many dangerous Voyages; yet were it folly to inferre, that without Arte, Experience, Card, or Astrolobe, wee should trie the dangers of Nauigation.

But whither goe I? my purpose was to speake somewhat of the true elixar, and to prooue that the text of Philosophers that writ vpon it, or the Commentaries and Orthodoxe exposition of those places are either strained, or altogether mistaken, which shall be cleered by that which followeth.

Hermes, Isindarius in codice omnis veritatis, the great Rosary, the pandects of Mary, the Prophetise (as some name her) Morien, Auicen, Balzane, Abugazall, Bengedide his brother, Abumazar, Hali, Calib, Esid, Serapien, Thomas in breuilogs, Michaell Scot

in his breuiary, Hemas in his retractions, Aros the Arabian King and learned Philosopher; and the most part of all the Philosophers hold foure chiefe tenents of this Elixar: First the Mercurie is taken to be the chiefe matter to worke vpon; Secondly, they hold that much punding and beating of the matter inculcat by Tere, Tere, Tere, atque iterum Tere ne te tedeat, quickneth and refineth the spirits and vertue thereof, and maketh the matter fit for the worke. Thirdly they maintaine that fixing of Ʋolatile, is the Magisterum or master peece of that worke. Lastly, they say when the red colour is espoused or conioyned to the white, the worke is perfected. A superficiall censure might take these literally, and conclude that preparing, sifting, ponding of the matter, putting of it in fit vessels, luting and calcination; sometimes feeding of that sulphurious furie with soft, sometimes with more hot fire, might in the end bring fourth some Salamander: but let vs not bee deceiued with such excursory suruey, and consider iudiciously what Aristotle in his light of lights, Avulfanes in his Pandects, Daniell in his retracts, Euclides in his Philosophicall meteours and almost all the Philosophers workes, affirme in these words our Mercury is not common Mercurie, our gold signified by the red colour is not common gold, neither our siluer signified by the white colour vulgar siluer, they are quicke, the other dead, they sperituall, the other corporall? what then is the Philosophers Mercury, but wisdome the childe of heauen, and the glory of the earth? the pounding and mixing of the matter, is the beating downe and qualifying of our affections in the morter of a wise heart; the feeding of it with more or lesse fire is, the timely pressing and relaxing of our corrupt will, the fixation of volatile, is the reduction of our inconstant running wits, to the solidity of true wisedome: Lastly the Redde colour ioyned to the white, which crownes the worke, giues vs to vnderstand, that perseuerance in vertue will gaine vs the garland of victorie ouer all foraigne incumbrances; and subdue our vnruly domesticke affections, which vnlesse they be ouercome, pounded, qualified, sublimat & fixed to a pure Syndon-like white, are euer ready to debord from the precinct of reason, to a soule-killing liberty.

We may see then (as a picture drawne by a skilfull workeman should haue relation to al the parts it imitateth; so the pounding feeding, fixing and perfecting of the Elixar, onely fitly resemble, the inconstancy and ebullition of our affections, which are ready to breake out and mar the glorious perfection of light, vnto which Philosophy intendeth to bring vs; if the most powerfull spirit of sanctification, by transmutation doe not Captiuate the powers and faculties of our soule.

Let vs goe a little further, in the seuerall operations, circumstances and qualities of the Philosophicall elixar, and wee shall finde, that neither of them may be fitly adapted to any thing else, then to mans formation in vertue. All ancient and moderne Philosophers agree, that by the true mixture of heate and cold, moist and dry, wee attaine to the knowledge of the qualities of things engendred thereby, as hard, soft, heauy, light, rough, smoothe, that in the elementall Commixtion the seuerall elements, as water, earth, fire and ayre, are to bee graduate in the degrees. That although earth be most vile, yet is it most apt for mulplication and generation; is the onely fixed element, whose multiplication is no lesse admirable then that of fire, whereof one sparke kindled in combustible matter, will increase till the subiect bee consumed; Againe all those Philosophers doe mystically obserue; that the Commixtion of the foure elements must be Gramatically, that is in Orthographicall disposition and conuenient Concordance; Rhetorically, that is orderly, ornatly or neatly; Logically, that is, by true kindes not sophisticated, that they must bee ioyned Arithmetically by proportionable numbers; Musically in the melody of true accord, and in the effects of harmony which

are glorious: neither (say Philosophers) is Astrologie to bee neglected for knowing the seasons of Coniunction. Lastly Magicall obseruation much auaileth, that is, wisdome to know the right disposition of the whole worke. When the elements (saith Anaxagoras) be thus orderly disposed and digested then will colours draw towards perfection; naturally will be sublimat to an intellectuall heate; which operation is knowne seldome and by few; when the naturall heate is thus purified, then nature and art by degrees aspire to perfection, which is knowne by chainge of colours in the work, which (as the foure Complexions in man) according to the right temperature of elements, their qualities, and their opposed passiues, beget a digestion, which may be as well sometimes in outward cold, which begetteth inward heate as in outward heate which causeth inward cold; although the chiefe digester bee the vitall heate of the degerent; that the heate of the digested things, helpes the digestion and the working thereof. Because Coagulation is no substanticall forme, but the passion of materiall things, in the elementall Commixtion, the Agent in the operation of colours is wisely to bee examined; sometimes it is heate, sometimes cold, sometimes moisture, sometimes drynesse, and those bee the causes of colours. Whitenesse is caused
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by cleere matter terminat in a fit subiect, blacke colour when parts of a darke body oppresse the cleerenesse of the subiect. Again, by Commixtion of light and darkenesse are engendred the meane colours, which shew also according to the more or lesse heate or cold, drynesse or moisture, as greene colour is a Commixtion of cleere water with earth by combust substance: so the cleerer the earth be the purer the greenesse is. Rubie colour is a thin fume in a cleere body, which is cleere or darke according to the quantity of the light, as appeareth in the

Amatist which hath lesse cleerenesse and more obscurity; Tauny colour is of terminat cleerenesse, infused with a thicke fumosity congregat by water, and succensed by earth. Pale colour is of watrish earthly parts, which being cold and thicke, are fixed in a kinde as in dying, or pale faced enuious men, in whom the naturall bloud leaueth the exterior parts, and resorteth to comfort the heart, the Saphire, or orient blew like vnto the heauen, is much fairer then the liuid pale colour, because it participats more with water, ayre and light; all other blew colours the sadder they bee, they haue lesse ayre, and more earth; Siluer colour turned to a bright azure is caused by brightnesse and perspicuity of ayre. Yellow citrine or golden colour is caused by strong decoction and
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digestion of humours ingendred by heate as in gold, hony, and gaule; and this colour is begotten of white and red. Thus haue you the elementall commixtion, colours and qualities to bee considered in the Philosophers worke, as the operation thereof begets diuers digestions and degrees of more or lesse perfection in the Creatures: so the participation and operation of supreame light, workes diuers effects in the minde of that prime Creature, which is onely capable of the beames and impression thereof; and in this minde of man an equality is most necessary. There must bee (saith Aristotle) no repugnancie nor diuision in our stone, till all colours haue appeared, that naturall matter by supernaturall cooperation may of many colours beget such a colour as is desired, which is more precious then all the Iewels in the world: therefore concludeth hee common Philosophers, can by no naturall meanes, attaine to the knowledge of this elixar.

Many other Philosophers, alluding to the same purpose, but more to shew their Curiositie, then to detect truth, adde smelling and tasting to the former apparition of colours; but these I ouerpasse as impertinent. Others more analogically say that the elixar must be dissolued, cherished, fixed, and reuiued by liquors, which are specially to bee
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considered in purity, quantity, thicknesse, and thinnesse, not physically, because the true Elixar is a thing of the second intention, and hath a Metaphysicall operation. Physicians say, the more thicke vryne is, the more it signifieth humidity: but the Phylosophers say, the more thick this liquour is, it hath the more siciety; and the more subtill it is, it betokeneth the greater humidity.

Aristeus saith, that ayre is secretly enclosed in water, and by an ayeriall power beareth vp earth. Aristotle saith, that the right separation of water from ayre, is a chiefe master-peece of the worke: other plaine dealing Philosophers doe holde, that Rayne water which commeth of condensed ayre, is the chiefe nutritiue liquour: others affirme, that Dewe falling from Heauen in May, before the Sunne enter into Scorpio, is a fit liquour for their stones; some say that all condensed frostie liquours are to bee reiected, because their acuitie is infected, and dulled with cold; others preferre milke for the whitenesse, some water of Litarge and A•ar; but Democritus, whom I preferre to all •hese silly men, aduiseth to take Coelestiall •ermauent water, whose vertue is to abide all •inde of fiery tryalls. Rupercissa saith, that •he chiefe liquour to refresh the Elixar, is Aqua vitae, because it is spirituall, it will re•iue dead things, and make grosse matters spirituall; Hermes bids vs take a liquour fresher then any water in taste, that will neuer consume, but the more it is vsed, the more it is encreased, and this liquour hee calleth Crude Mercurij, which is the matter of the white worke. All these liquours diuersly illustrate, haue naturally diuers powerfull qualities of cleansing, both of the substance and meanes by dissolution, separation, fixation and resoluing matter into Atommes, and as liquours haue diuers qualities and operations: so are they found by diuers meanes, sometimes by cutting, as in Terebinth; sometimes by pressing, as Wine, Sydar; sometimes by grinding, as Oyle; liquour is also found by distillation of Ʋegetables, Mettalls, and Animalls; some Liquours also by naturall working are produced, as vrine, sweat, milke, blood: all these liquors by a viscositie cleaue to things, and leaue part of their substance with them, but that vnconstant vagabond Quicksiluer is so fleeting, that he will neuer fasten to any thing, except to a mettall o• his owne kinde, that is (saith Calib) poysonable couetousnesse, or flowing riches, are seldome fixed or takes holde, but in subiects o• their owne kinde. By the knowledge o•diuersities, contrarieties, and accords, we may choose what quality we will make Lord; the perfection of loue is best knowen by the defects of hatred, of hope by feare, of confidenc•

by distrust, and of ioy by sorrowe: in all these and other things, our vnderstanding finde greater difficultie to finde them by resemblance, then by contraries. It is more hard to discerne white vpon white, then blacke vpon white; and there is greater wisedome to distinguish good from good, then euill from euill; because in the confusion of things, those that most resemble, are least knowne one from an other, but in the commixture of diuers things, either in quality or substance, they are instantly discouered. But let vs not trust that one thing may be hote and cold, drye and moyst in one posture, for two contraries can neuer subsist in one degree; therefore if wee know not euery circumstance and gradation of this great worke, wee shall neuer bring it to perfection: for as diuine prouidence by nature made all things in true number and proportion: so euery defect in that number and proportion is imperfect, and wrongeth both the first and second cause.

Wee must then consider wisely of the meanes whereby this worke is compleat and when they are purified in the third degree; the purer the meanes bee, the neerer to perfection they are, and retaines such a part of the vertue of this Art, that without their ayde, the principall may not giue influence to the finall end, neither the effluence answere the expectation of the principall cause. As

the Soule is tyed to the Body by meanes of a vitall, naturall, and animall spirit: so as long as these meanes keepe the body aliue; so long will the soule dwell with the body; but when nature or accident take away the meanes, the subtile pure immortall soule retyreth from the grosse body to immortalitie, for which shee was created. According to this, (say the Phylosophers) their Elixar hath corpus, animam & spiritum, all which must haue meanes agreeable to their kinde, and must be searched by wisedome, least by ignorance or misgouernement, the Diuine worke bee quite marred.

Thus hath my Plough shortly gone through the large field of the Phylosophicall Elixar; which by allusion to most pure metталls, is said to conuert and multiply other vnrefined mettals, hauing the seed of Gold, into pure Gold: but as you sowe, you shall reape; if you sowe sparingly, you shall reape sparingly; if you sowe darkenesse, you shall reape confusion; and if you sowe light, you shall reape ioy. Aurum ab aquilone veniet, that is pure ayre of wholesome doctrine, duely and seasonably sowen, bringeth foorth millions; but as this seed is sowen by them who haue their mindes long exercised in vertue: so is it increased in none but in those that haue their mindes capable of so holy an impression. Threshing, winnowing, grinding are necessary

vses for Wheate, yet belong not to the Bakers Craft: but sifting, mixing, and gouernment of fire, are workes of greater skill; if Reason and holinesse bee the beginning of euery action, doubtlesse the visible things will separat from the inuisible▪ that is water and earth from fire and aire; for things are corporall, because they shall be spirituall, which the wheele of the great worke will make manifest when time (the Steward, and dispensator of euery thing) shall one day bring euery thought vpon the Stage.

But to returne to Philosophy, if wee will giue her the due praises which shee deserueth, wee shall finde that her refyning of vs in vertue, is to a more pure substance, then of thrice purified gold: if wee would from vice extract vertue, quintessence, content and true reputation from pouerty and contempt, Conuert exile into our natiue Country, bonds into liberty, want into wealth, or would wee multiply some few short earthly crosses into Caelestiall permanent ioyes, all these can Philosophy doe. Philosophy can make Codrus better content then Cresus; Diogenes contemne great Alexanders conquests; braue banished Rutilius prefer solitarinesse to the greatnesse and magnificence of his City, and affirme that by purchasing the friendship of Philosophy hee hath liued no longer then hee was banished: Magnanimous

Philosophy will encourage Aristarchus to doe more then all these, by teaching him, brused in a morter, to cry out triumphantly, Stampe on, you hurt but the case of Arstiarchus, but his mind you cannot touch. It is Philosophy that in aduersity (as steele from flint) draweth from vs that sparke of diuine fire left in our soules, which kindleth vertue and makes it appeare in its owne colour. What other thing shall I call Philosophy, then the light of this life, Mistres of our affections, Tut•ix of our felicity, and the vpright couragious gouernment of our selues in all our actions by the rule of reason? or may I not name her a stryuing and contention of the soule, to repaire the weake mortality of the body, by participation of eternall light, vnto whose fruition shee draweth vs so much as she can, imploying art and industry, to procure vs glory and fame for a quiet minde heare, and for a happy and glorious hereafter. This diuine Philosophy begetteth such pleasure in our soule, whilest wee are imployed about braue and generous actions, specially, when Constancy wrestleth with prosperity or aduersity, the habit thereof commeth to such a sweetnesse, that none but such as haue tasted it, can expresse. What greater content|ment can come to the soule, then the testi|monie that Conscience beareth vnto vertue; how with vndaunted courage she hath with|stood

aduerse fortune, and hath not yeelded to the Cyrcean cups of honour, riches or plea|sures, then are our ioyes compleat; then doth glorie and spendor shine about vs and giue vs preheminence amongst men, if it were one|ly as a torch to lighten vs to faire and glori|ous actions: for if wee owe vnto posterity the most part of our best actions, what more earnest wishes should we haue, then our liues may be sacrifized to publike good? These sweats and labours for generall benefit, affoord vs meanes to enrich others by imitation, and make our selues illustrious by the commen|dation of vertue.

But when we yeeld our selues captiues to the bondage of pleasures, then steele we the darts that pearce our owne breasts; Base Te|legonus begotten on Circe, killed his owne Father Vlisses: Venus retribution of Helena to Paris for his golden ball, was the blazing star, that foretold his ruine and the ouer|throw of many worthy Troians beside: in one word, Great Alexander bewayling the inchantments of effeminat softnesse, named the Persian Dames, dolores oculorum, or bad salues for sore eyes.

Egesias the Cirenian, was so powerfull in a publike Philosophicall discourse of the im|mortallity of the soule, that most of his Au|ditors hastened their deaths with their owne hands; if these Heathen, who had onely the

gloomy light of nature were so sinisterly zea|lous to haue the reward of vertue, by pre|uenting nature with vntimely death, what ill lucke is it, that we who haue the Oracles of eternall truth are so carelesse & prodigall of our short time, that we doe not freely en|ioy the happinesse of true diuine light, which onely sheweth generous spirits, worthy to be the master-peece of that soueraigne worke-master their Creator, I can giue no other rea|son, then quos perdere vult Iupiter hos demen|tat; or that our imaginatiō, which is beneath vnderstanding, and aboue the Senses, to whom belongeth the censure of things, suffereth her selfe oftimes to be corrupted or misled; and doth receiue onely the superficiall and externall forme of things from the senses, the Centinels of the soule, which she presents with fauour to the soule, as they seeme gracefull to her, and not as they are vniuersally profitable to the welfare of man: so that from superficiall imagination, and partiall relation, proceeds that apprehension of the goodnesse or badnesse of things that we call opinion, which is a rash guide, and so seizeth vpon our imagination, that most times we stand at defiance against reason.

Neither doth opinon shew her selfe violent in any thing more, then inforcing her vassels to lay hold vpon an imaginary speculation of this golden Elixar, or light incorporat

with smoake, by which (if it were found as it will neuer be) the purchasers should bee but depriued of true liberty, and the seminary of all mischiefe, and Cimerian darknesse dispersed thorow the world.

If any mistake me, and thinke that in this Tillage of light, I seeme to withdraw the due praise of art, it is farre from my meaning I wish that euery Artist were equalled with the art; animated to vertuous designes, and not checked for vndertaking by euery goodman goosecap, who grace learning or vertue with a fogh, as Tobacconists doe their smoake, but in a different manner, the one in derogation, countenance the most elaborat studies of the braine, as the addition of beggars or imposture, not worthy the least glimpse of a fauourable aspect: the other sacrifize their fume through their noses with such deuotion to an angrie fac't Bacchus, as oftimes straines teares from their eyes; and that is the top of their gallantry: But certainely good manners should not be much wronged, if in a quipping veine, such were serued as a sturdy hostler once girded a country mans vnmannerly Mare; so should they haue quid pro quo, and perhaps be grated to the quicke that such moathes as labour to extinguish the light of other mens goodnesse, might

haue their wings singed for their paines: for it is certaine that wisdome, pollicy and learning haue no such enemies as Fooles, Ruffians, and Jgnorants; not that witty Ignoramus, that was acted at Cambridge, but that squint-eyed Enuy or stupidity, that depriueth men as well of the feeling of good, as of euill, and participateth more with the humour and inclination of beasts then of men.

It is alwayes the common misery of poore spirits, to enuy that light in others, which they haue not in themselues; so is it the common consolation of those, to desire compartners in their wants; specially when they dreame to themselues such security, as no aduerse accident can encounter: then doe they in pride or insolency deride or disualue better flowers then grow in their owne garden; esteeming that other mens reputation ecclipseth their greatnesse.

It is encouragement that addes vse to art; and it is the honour of Kings, and chiefe title of inferiour Lights to be protectors and cherishers of religion, vertue and learning, and to finde out the secrets of art: but I wish that cunning Alchimists would vnderstand, that it is the wisdome of Kings and garland of true nobility to bee so learned or wise, as they may distinguish betwixt true art and insinuating foppery, or curious

vnprofitable search, which for gaine or other wrong ends, put faire vizards vpon foule faces, and maskes cheating or curiosity with art, which are indeed alients from it. These Alchimists attend greatnesse as Apes or Parrats, by shewing feats of actiuity in gesture, discoursing and imitation; yet their end is to catch Dotrels and put them to sale.

The best paterne to pry into their counsell, and bring them to the light was cut by the hand of the Great light; which although it shineth as well in the darkest corner of the heart, as in the most transparent yolke of purest Christall, yet inferiour lights can neither see, nor shine, but in the transparencie of their owne or others workes. Their care must bee then to cognosce and distinguish, when pride fights vnder the colours of humility, hipocrisie is cloathed in Religious habit; when corruption is garded with the shew of Iustice, Vice fairded with Vertue, and when Sophistry seemes to boult out much by logicall reason, which wil not abide the plowing of light, and are weake and sinowlesse in the Schoole of practise, as experience hath taught vs. If wee were as carefull to bee, what we seeme to be, as wee are curious to seeme to be what we are not, crooked cunning should not goe current for art. Wee should not be ostentantes, but ostendantes pietatem

our penny should be as common as our Pater noster, that is, our light should so shine in our workes as Angels and men seeing, might sing a ioyfull Aleluiah to the

Great light; but as all is not gold that glistereth: so eue|rie cleere body the more cleere it seemes to bee, is not the more neerer to purity and simplicity; some by a well tempered Elemen|tarie mixture, and radicall heate by coopera|tion and powerfull influence of the sunne shew cleere and firme as they are: euery body of this kinde the more cleere, it is the neerer to simplicity, more able to abide the touchstone of Truth; by how much more it hath a simpathicall resemblance to purest liquid substances, as hony, wine, oyle and the like, which before they yeeld themselues to vse, expell all dregges that abates their ver|tue, or blemish their lustre: there bee other seeming pure bodies, that by a frosty con|densation of congealed cold humours, as|sumes a cleerenesse, and in a kinde, shew as fixed lights, but are not neerer to perfecti|on; apply but fire, or the least gale of a thaw winde, and forthwith they dissolue incor|porat with more corruption then they had before: these counterfeit substances fitly resemble puddle water which wants the former expulsiue vertue, that separats the pure from the impure; whereby they de|cline from their naturall perfection to an

vnwholesome rottennesse, which is good for none, but harmefull, or loathsome to all.

Now to digge vp the last offensiue stone in the right tillage of the Phylosophicall light. Euery Christian ought to haue such affection, to loue and search the workes of the most Blessed, so farre as the enquirie is reuealed, and is profitable in the true ends; to admire the rest, and to propose mysteries no otherwise then they vnderstand, least like blinde Mountanus, they commend the Mulet, and poynt quite contrary. As in the Eleusine sacrifices, the Nouices that were initiated, lay all along vpon the ground, till the seruice was ended: so in the Mysteries of diuine wisdome, wee haue no such counte|nance as humility, which is the cognizance of that greatnesse, and our basenesse.

Hee that knoweth our shallownesse, lo|ueth better a credulous heart, then a curi|ous head, and other mens harmes tell vs, it is more dangerous to surfet vpon wit, then want it.

Man is the Microcosmes, or abridgement of the Creation; the Phylosophers worke is the abridgement of mans Formation. As the World was made of two seuerall parts, the one intelligible, sensible, and corruptible, the other, vntelligible, insensible, and incorruptible: So man was made the middle peece of both,

and perfection of the Intellectuall parts, which hee hath by meanes of the body; but in his Soule were the most excellent perfections that be in the incorruptible world, but are so originally depraued, and depressed with earth, and weighed downe with the burthen of flesh, that all the indeauours of Diuine and Humane Phylosophers, can neuer sufficiently labour in mans new formation, without which his condition is worse then if hee had not been at all: therfore, as in man we rather obserue what hee is, then what hee seemes to bee: so in the other creatures, wee must not expect that from violence, which is proper to temperance, or looke for goodnesse in Thunder, Fire, or Earth-quake; Nature produceth euery thing how excellent soeuer, by an insensible motion, and not by violence, and prematured Byrthes, are euer imperfect: whereby it falleth out, that those who erre by Arte, erre most dangerously, arming themselues in obstinacie, with Science against Reason: but they that leaue the high way, and betake themselues to by-lanes, should know the place well, least they bee wildred. Nature is a better Physician then Art: and Sobrietie can cure moe diseases then all Paracelsian Chymicalls; let vs value our selues as we ought, and we shall make little account of the toylesome vnprofitable
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niceties of Art. The Prophet did not wrap his face in his mantell, till the soft voyce came; all diuine and morall knowledge haue their termination in rest; the first no eye hath seene, or eare hath heard, or tongue is able to expresse; the other with admirable vertue and splendor attaineth to that peace of Conscience which passeth all vnderstanding, by the vnion, and iudicious Diapason of discordant tones.

Now that I bee not transported beyond my promise, I will vnyoake my almost wearied Plough, hoping what I haue tilled will direct puny Husbands to the knowledge of the Phylosophers Light, how it must bee ploughed, what Seed is to bee sowen in right season, and what is the increase; that all other Tillage is but curiositie, misprision, forgery, or imposture, otherwise then in the culture of the Naturall or Physicall operation and vertue of Alchimy, from which I detract nothing.

It resteth now, that I shake hands with such Alchimists as labour in the timpany of a false Elixar, that we may remaine friends or friendly enemies: yet lest I should vnder value my selfe, I offer these ensuing Articles to bee performed before agreement.

First, that they arme their Resolution with patience for losses past, and with

perseuerance in the studie of the true Elixar; smarting cures are best suffered by the one, and great Affayres are neuer brought to good end, but by Constancie, and calmnnesse. They that haue their mindes higher then their fortune, must haue care that their passion ouer-reach not their reason; and Cloath that shrinketh in the wetting, neuer prooueth good in the wearing. If they can commaund themselues thus, without doubt they shall bee capable to gouerne the world, and so bee masters of the great worke: Moderation will giue them leasure to finde out the time, place, matter, and all necessary aduantages to compasse their designes: if they finde to their griefe the doore shut one way, they may then redeeme such affliction, by finding out a more easie and better passage to the true Elixar. If they giue way to sharpe and passionate motions, which disturbe the conduction of affayres, then shall they bee exposed to precipitation, obstinacie, indiscretion, and impatience.

Secondly, for shunning of these euills, I desire, when they haue plowed this Light after mee, they breake all their Chimicall imaginary golden pots, least with Perillus, they perish in their owne inuentions; or (as Homers Cyclope promised to Vlysses) when they haue eaten their goods, which are their Companions, perhaps they eat themselues
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last of all. Faire showes ballanced with their incommodities, prooue oft times vnprofitable, troublesome, or harmefull, as the Italian Prouerb implieth.

Chi ha bianco Cauallo, et bella moglie
No viue maj sansa doglie.
For preuention of this euill, or enioying of that good, hopes and feares are rightly to bee mixed, by foresight and prouidence of the difficulties and goodnesse that may arise: and in this kinde, I wish the feare of such Phylosophers as labour for a

materiall Elixar, may preuaile ouer their hopes; but if their hope presupposeth such a good is to be obtayned, my feare beleeueth that these former or ensuing euills will bee hardly auoyded. Our wit and vnderstanding ought to bee rather bent to regard the difficulties of things of high reach, then to bee hoodwinkt with the Tantalus-like hope of impossibilities: If they doe otherwise, it is likely that in the end diffidence will follow feare, and knowing her selfe vncapable to auert the euill, and enioy the good that Chimicall curiositie so much affecteth, shee conuert her selfe into despayre, and so plunge her owners in Menipus his misery: for when the consideration of euill begetteth despaire, then oft times that despaire is the
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end of the motion of all other passions, as Ioy is the repose and rest of good; and this is a chiefe reason why Wisedome doth examine things by the end.

If Golde dreaming Alchimistes would make vp some part of their losses by the reliques of the purest matter, they may put it to sale, to annoynt maungie Hackneyes; for which, if wee may beleeue auncient Farryers, it is a soueraigne cure: or if truth may haue trust, all their Ignitions, Calcinations, Dissolutions, Amalgations, Circulations, Sublimations, Fixations, and Multiplications, otherwise then in a spirituall sense, are but borrowed words of Art, to make vnguent for •adish itching diseases, smoake to ruine craz'd estates, or trumpery to vphold Mountebanckes vpon the charges of the more curious then wise.

It is the best halfe of the worke, to choose a good subiect. In suiting base matter with the ornaments of learning, sheweth much wit, but little wisdome; and it fareth with such, as it doth with those that trap Asses with golden furniture; or with children, who build castles in the sand, which are defaced with euery breath; or with curious workemen, who caruing in knottie Timber, haue toyle without end, for their election without iudgment. Perseus his scarre sits in the forehead of Curiositie, Ostentat obstrusam
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eruditionem spirando ambitionem, sed carendo occasione iustae necessitatis, aut intentione piae vtilitatis. Let vs colour blemishes as wee will, yet a Croope shoulder is euer knowen howsoeuer it bee boulstered; and they that paint olde faces, hardly hide the wrinckles. In Catalognia there is a statute, whereby Cuckolds pay tribute; mee thinkes that law is iust if it had an addition, that all curious search

should bee fined or punished, that as all husbands might looke to their charge, in barring such bankets of Turnups as inrolles them in Cornhill Kallender: so incroaching Curiosities might not so much trouble the repose of more profitable studies. Such subiects are only worthy of a Philosophers Pen or Practice, as (like Archias Lute) wilspeake for their master. They want election, that in a field of Corne only make vse of Cockle; and they want discretion, that hauing a whole field of Vertue before them, rather with Menedemus, become sellers of trifles, with the fooles of the world, loosers of time, or with Martiall, missimployers of good wits, then with the learned or wise, honour their Countrey by affecting Sciences of greater obseruation. But such are the customes of curious or cunning men, to blind the election of others, that for the most part, they seeke out the poyson of wit to corrupt the same; like that Mayd, who
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being accustomed to feed vpon Serpents, did make vse of poyson for her naturall refection.

When presumption simpathizes not with iudgement, and preferres craized vnderstanding, or misled opinion before certaine knowledge and true wisdome without further examination; there such defects of wit or sophisticated art, pay smooke with winde, and base mettall with false coyne. The nature of vanity values things by ostentation, not by reallity, and this vanity begetteth curiosity which esteemeth better of the currentnesse of shewes then of the goodnesse and vertues of things. Such is the habit of curiosity and cunning that I blush as I write, and yet I write to make the world blush; but I rowle Sisiphus stone; if I should straine my wit to dregges, I feare it shall not stem the torrent of worldly streames: Men are richest in infirmities, weakest in foresight, apt to entertaine hurtfull pleasures, or errours, and ignorant to reforme them; vniuersall propositions, require no instance and none take acception at generall termes but the guilty.

Thirdly, I desire that such Alchimists as are studious in the true Philosophers Elixar, Metamorphise Raimond, Albertus Magnus, Veckerus de Secretis, Frier Bacon and the like into Solon, Pithagoras, Socrates, Aristotle
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and in others of all ages that haue gotten the glory to be the wisest and most learned; all which haue left this maxime in wryting; that in the immortallity of the

soule, as in the center of Philosophy, doe meete and end all rules that may conduce to the wholsome conseruation of ciuill life, and true tranquillity of minde, about which Philosophers so much laboured When such Heathen husbands of natures light erre, in racking of Supreame light, with the tenter-hookes of Curiosity, or humane reason, let Sacred writ be Vmpier, and leuell such balkes with the better plowed ground of Christian harmony.

Lastly, if all well disposed Alchimists will neither straine the first nor last Philosophers meaning to wrong ends, and admit such fauourable construction to the labours of vertue, as the name, Maiesty, and practice of Philosophy doe challenge our friendship, is so combined, that we shall reape the rich haruest of our Tillage of light, that speakes Glory to the Creator, and ioy to the creature.

FINIS.

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QUOTE OF THE DAY

“The property therefore of our water is, that it melts or dissolves gold and silver, and increases their native tincture or color. For it changes their bodies from being corporeal, into a spirituality; and it is in this water which turns the bodies, or corporeal substance into a white vapor, which is a soul which is whiteness itself, subtile, hot and full of fire. This water also called the tinging or blood-color-making stone, being the virtue of the spiritual tincture, without which nothing can be done; and is the subject of all things that can be melted, and of liquefaction itself, which

> agrees perfectly and unites closely with sol and luna from which it can never be separated. For it joined [joins?] in affinity to the gold and silver, but more immediately to the gold than to the silver; which you are to take special notice of. It is also called the medium of conjoining the tinctures of sol and luna with the inferior or imperfect metals; for it turns the bodies into the true tincture, to tinge the said imperfect metals, also it is the water that whiteneth, as it is whiteness itself, which quickeneth, as it is a soul; and therefore as the philosopher saith, quickly entereth into its body.”

Artephius

The Secret Book of Artephius

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